

Glasgow Weekly Times.

CLARK H. GREEN:

"ERROR CEASES TO BE DANGEROUS, WHEN REASON IS LEFT FREE TO COMBAT IT."—JEFFERSON.

EDITOR & PROPRIETOR.

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THE TIMES

THE SUBJECT OF THE TARIFF.

As the settlement of the Tariff by the present Congress, will be a topic of the deepest importance, and as the views of the Secretary of the Treasury, and, we presume, of the administration generally, in relation to the matter, will be sought after by the public, we annex at that portion of the Report of the Secretary of the Treasury, in which he discusses the particular subject.

To provide for the payment out of the revenue of the instalment which will be due to Mexico in the fiscal year ending 30th June, 1852, to secure the raising of a fund for the gradual extinguishment of our heavy public debt, and to place the revenue on a sure basis of sufficiency for all the expenditures of the Government, it will be necessary to adopt measures for increasing the revenue; and the most available means to that end are to be found in raising the duties on imports. That an economy as rigid as may be found compatible with the necessities of the country will regulate the appropriations under existing circumstances, cannot be doubted.

In proposing some alterations in the existing tariff, with a view, as well to the necessary augmentation of the revenue as the encouragement of industry, I think it right to present distinctly the views entertained on the latter subject, in the hope that a course may be adopted by the wisdom and patriotism of Congress, which may tend to harmonize discordant feelings and promote the general prosperity.

1. I entertain no doubt of the right of power of Congress to regulate commerce and levy imposts and duties, with the purpose of encouraging our own industry. In selecting for adoption one of two proposed regulations of commerce, it would appear to be clearly the right of Congress to choose that one which would in its opinion, be most salutary to the country; and in like manner in laying imposts and duties, it would seem that the endeavor ought to be to regard the interests of the whole people, not as little but as much as possible.

It is not a question of assuming a power not expressly granted by the Constitution, on the ground that it may tend to the attainment of a general end therein expressed. Here the power to regulate commerce and the power to levy and collect duties are expressly given, and the only question is, whether they ought or ought not to be exercised with a view to the general good.

It seems to me that to exercise these or any other powers with any other view, would be a misuse of power and subversive of the legitimate end of Government.

I find no obligation written in the Constitution to lay taxes, duties or imposts at the lowest rate that will yield the largest revenue.

If it were true, that a duty laid on a given article with a view to encourage our own productions is unlawful, because it may operate, by discouraging importation, as a partial prohibition, the proposition would be equally true of every duty laid with that intent, whether it were above or below the maximum revenue rate. But, as under the power to regulate commerce it is competent for Congress to enact a direct and total prohibition of the importation of any article, it can be no objection to an act levying duties, that it may operate in partially preventing importation. Whether it be wise or just so to levy duties, is another question. What I mean to say now is, that there is no prohibition of it in the Constitution. The proposition is maintained, as universally true, that the express grant of a power to Congress gives to that body the right of exercising that power in such manner as in its opinion may be most conducive to the advantage of the country.

As instances of the exercise of the power of regulating commerce, may be mentioned the prohibition of importations, except at designated ports; the prohibition of the coasting trade to all American vessels, not licensed and enrolled; the prohibition of certain trade to foreign vessels under the Navigation act of 1817; the prohibition of certain trade to American vessels by the non-intercourse act, and of all trade by the Embargo act; the drawback on the re-exportation of foreign goods; finally, the prohibition of the introduction of adulterated drugs into the country by the act of 26th June, 1848.

Under the power to levy taxes, duties, and imposts, I refer to the discriminating tonnage duties on foreign vessels, the discriminating duties on their cargoes, the preamble to the first law imposing duties passed under the Constitution, and the enactment of most of the subsequent ones.

These enactments show that at most or all periods of our history the views which I have expressed appear to have been sustained and acted on.

II. All legislation designed to favor a particular class to the prejudice of others, or to injure a particular class for the benefit of others, is manifestly unwise and unjust. Nothing can be more destructive of the true interests of the country than such legislation, except the refusal of really salutary legislation, under an erroneous impression that it might favor one class to the prejudice of others, while in fact the denial of it injures all classes, and benefits nobody.

III. As every producer in one branch of useful industry is also a consumer of the products of others, and as his ability to consume depends upon the profits of his production, it follows that to give prosperity to one branch of industry is to increase that of the rest. Within each branch of industry there will be individual rivalry, but among the several branches of useful industry there must always exist an unbroken harmony of interest.

No country can attain a due strength or prosperity that does not by its own labor carry its own productions as nearly as possible to the point necessary to fit them for ultimate consumption. To export its raw material and re-import the articles manufactured from it, or to neglect its own raw materials and import the articles manufactured from that of another country is to preclude the means which nature has provided for its advancement.

For instance, we exported, during the fiscal year ending 30th June, 1849, raw cotton to the value of about sixty-six millions of dollars. If that cotton had been spun and woven at home, (supposing its value to be increased fourfold by manufacture) it would have produced a value of about one hundred and ninety-eight millions in addition.—What would have been the effect of the increased production on the prosperity of the country?

This question would not be completely answered by merely pronouncing the added value of one hundred and ninety-eight millions of dollars, to be a large profit to the manufacturer, any more than the question of the effect of the production of wheat would be answered by deducting the cost of seed wheat from the value of the crop, and pronouncing the remainder to be a large profit to the farmer.

The manufacture of cotton cloth is begun with the planting of cotton—it is carried to a certain point by the planter, and then taken up and perfected by the spinner and weaver. The planter and the manufacturer are not engaged in different branches of industry, but in the same—the one commences the process which the other completes. Cotton seed of insignificant value being by regular stages of labor developed and brought to the form of cotton cloth, has acquired a value of about two hundred and sixty-four millions.

The planting States have added many millions to the annual production of the country by the culture of cotton. By continuing the process they could quadruple that addition.

The planter would then have a market at his door for all his produce, and the farmer would in like manner have a home market for his. The power of consumption of not only breadstuffs, but of every article useful or necessary in the feeding, clothing, and housing of man, would be vastly increased—the consumer and producer would be nearer to each other—and in fact a stimulus would be applied to every branch of productive industry.

It is gratifying to know that the manufacture of cotton has already been introduced into several of the planting States, and it ought not to be doubted will rapidly be extended.

The manufacture of iron, wool, and our other staples would lead to similar results. The effect would be a vast augmentation of our wealth and power.

Upon commerce the effects might be expected to be, if possible, still more marked. It is not enough to say that no country ever diminished its commerce by increasing its productions—and that no injury would therefore result to that interest. There would probably be, not only a great increase in the amount, but an improvement not less important in the nature of our commerce.

Of the immense addition that would accrue to our internal and coasting trade, (which in every country forms the great and most valuable body of commerce,) it is unnecessary to do more than merely speak in passing—but it may do well to offer a few remarks on foreign commerce.

Commerce is the machinery of exchange. It is the handmaid of agriculture and manufactures. It will not be affirmed that it is ever positively inju-

rious—but it will be more or less useful as it co-operates more or less with the productive industry of the country.—The mere carriage of commodities by sea or land is necessarily profitable only to the carrier who is paid for it. It may be useful or not to others according to circumstances. The farmer finds a railroad a great convenience, but he understands that it is better employed in carrying away his seed-wheat and manure.

The commerce which should consist in carrying cotton seed abroad, to be there grown, would not be so useful as that which is now occupied in exporting the raw cotton grown at home.—We should easily understand, also, that the commerce thus employed would be much more limited in amount and much less profitable to the carriers than we now have. Yet our present commerce is, in fact, of the same nature with that above described. The seed bears to the cotton the same relation which the cotton bears to the cloth. If we now export cotton of the value of about sixty-six millions, the same cotton, when converted into cloth, would make an export of some two hundred and sixty-four millions, or some two hundred and forty-five millions after deducting the fifteen or twenty millions which would be required for our own consumption, (in addition to the portion of our present manufactures consumed at home,) and our imports would be thereby in like manner increased. England, at this moment, derives a large portion of her power from spinning and weaving our cotton. When we shall spin and weave it ourselves, make our own iron, and manufacture our other staples, we shall have transferred to this country the great centres of wealth, commerce, civilization, and political, as well as moral and intellectual power.

At present, we are far from having the amount of foreign commerce which is due to our position, as a vastly productive country, with an extensive coast, good harbors, great internal water-courses, and a people unsurpassed in maritime skill and enterprise.

Our annual products were estimated by my predecessor in this Department, at three thousand million dollars, while our average exports are about one hundred and thirteen millions, and our imports about one hundred and six millions, making together two hundred and nineteen millions, exclusive of gold and silver and of foreign commodities imported and re-exported. An eminent British authority estimates the annual creation of wealth in Great Britain and Ireland, at between two thousand one hundred and two thousand two hundred millions. If we add, for articles omitted by him, between three and four hundred millions, we shall have a total of two thousand five hundred millions. The British exports and imports amount annually to about five hundred and twenty millions exclusive of gold and silver, and of foreign commodities imported and re-exported. If their foreign trade were brought down to our scale upon this estimate, it would be reduced to about one hundred and eighty-three millions. If ours were raised to their scale, it would reach about six hundred and twenty-four millions.

Estimating the population of Great Britain and Ireland at thirty millions, and our population at twenty-one millions, their foreign trade averages \$17 33 for each individual; ours \$10 42.—If their foreign trade were no greater than ours in proportion it would be reduced from five hundred and twenty to three hundred and twelve millions. If our foreign trade were as great in proportion to population as is theirs, it would be swelled in amount from two hundred and nineteen to three hundred and sixty-four millions.

A leading cause of the existing difference is to be found in the fact, that Great Britain exports chiefly what she has first brought to the form in which it is ready for ultimate consumption; and her market is almost co-extensive with the civilized world.

All history shows that where are the work shops of the world, there must be the marts of the world, and the heart of wealth, commerce, and power. It is as vain to hope to make these marts by providing warehouses, as it would be to make a crop by building barns.

IV. Whether we can have work shops to work up, at least, our own materials, must depend upon the question, whether we have or can obtain sufficient advantages to justify the pursuit of this kind of industry.

The circumstances favorable to production in this country may be stated to be: 1st Facility in procuring raw materials. 2d. Abundance of fuel.—3d. Abundance of food and other articles necessary for the sustenance and housing of the laborer. 4th. The superior efficiency of the laborers in comparison with those of other countries.

The circumstances supposed to be

unfavorable to our production, may be thus classed—

1st. Want of capital.

2d. Dearness of our labor as compared with that of other countries.

3d. Insecurity by exposure to the influence of violent and excessive fluctuations of price in foreign markets, and to undue foreign competition.

1st. Capital, which is but the accumulated savings of labor, is believed to be abundant among ourselves for any purpose to which it can be profitably applied. It is more divided than in some other countries, and associations of capital are therefore more common among us than elsewhere. It will be increased by the labor of every successive year, and for investments reasonably secure, it will flow in whenever required (as it has always heretofore done) from other countries, where it may exist in greater abundance. The amount of capital required for a large production is not enormous. The whole capital, for instance, employed in the establishment and support of iron-works in England and Wales in 1847, has been estimated at less than one hundred millions of dollars; the annual production then being about one million two hundred thousand tons.

2d. The difference between the price of labor here and in Great Britain is certainly great, and, it is to be hoped and expected, will never be diminished by a reduction of wages here. The difference has been estimated, at an average of thirty-three per cent. Probably the average difference is much more than that. In some branches, such as the manufacture of iron, it is certainly much greater. This difference is in part compensated by the disadvantages under which the foreign manufacturer is placed by the necessity in some branches of procuring his raw material from a great distance, or transporting a heavy article of production (such as iron) to a distant market. In addition he is pressed by a heavy burden of taxation. The greater efficiency of our labor is to some extent an additional compensatory element. This includes the greater capacity for acquiring skill, the superior general intelligence, the higher inventive faculty, the greater moral and physical energy, both of action and endurance, which our people possess in comparison with the foreign laborer. Better fed, clothed, housed, and educated—conscious of the ability to lay up some capital annually from his savings—encouraged to invest that capital in the enterprise in which his labor is engaged—enjoying practically greater civil and political liberty, looking forward to an indefinite future in which, through his own good conduct and example, he may expect each successive generation of his descendants to be better circumstanced than its predecessors, it cannot be doubted that these advantages add greatly to the efficiency of the American laborer.

The precise extent to which they go towards compensating the difference in the price of labor, it is difficult to define. The efficiency of our labor may be expected to increase with the increase of reward to the laborer. In many of the New England factories, the laborers are encouraged to invest their surplus earnings in the stock of the company by which they are employed, and are thus stimulated, by direct personal interest, to the greatest exertion. It may be expected that this system will be introduced into other branches in which it may be found practicable, tending, as it does, so powerfully to elevate the laborer, increase production, and practically instruct all men in the great truth of the essential harmony of capital and labor.

3d. Capital flows freely at home and abroad in every productive channel in which it can flow safely, and will even incur great hazards, if they be such as its owner may hope to meet by the care and circumspection of himself or others to whom he has confided its management. But if he knows that skill, industry, and economy cannot avail him, and that, in addition to all the contingencies of rivalry and markets, he is to be further exposed to dangers arising from causes quite beyond his control or counteraction, he will hold back. The vacillations which have occurred in our policy have no doubt deterred a large amount of capital from investment in industrial pursuits. The encouragement offered on one day, and on the faith of which fixed investments have been made, which are exposed to loss by the withdrawal of that encouragement on the next, is in fact substantial discouragement. And the insecurity resulting from the repetition of such acts has been seriously detrimental.

4th. The fluctuations in the foreign markets have for many years been such as seem to denote an unhealthy and feverish state of business. They are not in the natural course of a wholesome trade. They seem to betoken a change in existing arrangements, and the apprehension of such change is also evinced in the efforts now making in

England to sustain the British manufacturer, by putting at hazard other important branches of industry. The competition of new establishments with very large ones already in existence abroad, and in which the price of labor is lower, is evidently not an equal competition. The capital fixed in the machinery, furnaces, &c., cannot be changed, and the work of production will not cease until the price shall have been reduced to a point very little above the cost of materials, labor, and repairs. Of course where the lower price is paid for labor, there will be a larger margin for reduction by the sacrifice of part of the profit; and where a great accumulation is in hand of the avails of the business of former years, the owner may find it his interest for a while to sell his commodity at less than the actual cost, if by that means he can drive out his rival, looking of course, to subsequent reimbursement (at least) when he shall again have the control of the market.

This known necessity of the position of foreign manufactures of course tends to discourage now as well as to defeat the successful operation of existing investments of capital here in similar enterprises.

To counteract the influence of these unfavorable circumstances, which so long as they continue, must greatly retard our advancement, limit our foreign commerce, and prevent the due progress of industry, I propose that the duties on the staple commodities, (whether raw material or manufactured articles) in which foreign nations compete with our own productions, be raised to a point at which they will afford substantial and sufficient encouragement to our domestic industry, provide for the necessary increase and due security of the revenue, and ensure the permanence and stability of the system. Experience has, I think, shown this to be a wise, just, and effectual mode to promote new and revive languishing branches of industry, provided the selection of the objects be wisely made and limited to those productions for which the country is naturally adapted.

We have been perhaps too long hesitating and vacillating on the threshold of a great career. The want of stability in the course of legislation, and other disturbing causes, have heretofore occasioned inconveniences. The short duration of some of the tariff acts, the great expansion of the currency which occurred during their operation—the Compromise act, (a result of what was believed to be a political necessity,) which, whatever its effects on existing establishments, undoubtedly discouraged new adventures—and finally the unexpected repeal of the act of 1842—these circumstances have certainly been of a retarding character.

Yet it is impossible not to observe that, at every favorable moment, vast movements in advance have been made and that the ground thus gained has not been entirely lost. It is believed that every article, the manufacture of which has been established here, has, after that establishment, continued gradually to diminish in price, and that the wages of labor, which, indeed could not be diminished by reason of an increased demand for it.

These facts lend irresistibly to the conclusion that our labor becomes so much more efficient by use, acquired skill, enlarged establishments, and new facilities derived from inventions, that the difference in price between it and the foreign labor, however serious an obstacle to successful competition, will become less so with every year of our activity in the same branch of industry; and that it by no means follows that labor must be worse paid because its products are sold cheaper, or that because labor is better paid, its products must be sold dearer.

All that is wanting is a general determination that industry shall be encouraged in the home production and manufacture of iron, wool, cotton, sugar, and our other staples, and that the legislation necessary to sustain it shall be firmly adopted and persevered in.

I will proceed to state the nature of the modifications which it appears expedient to make in the existing tariff, and if required, will hereafter present a plan in detail.

1. The rates of duty are, in my opinion, too low, especially on articles similar to our own staples. I conceive that the revenue has suffered materially from this circumstance. Indeed, I am compelled to believe that it would have been greatly diminished but for the extraordinary demand for our breadstuffs and provisions produced by the famine in Europe in 1847, and to a great extent continued by the short crop abroad in 1848. Even under these favorable circumstances, the average revenue from woollens, cottons, hempen goods, iron sugar, hemp unmanufactured, salt and coal, has fallen under the act of 1846, from \$14,162,007 to 13,302,642

50, taking the average from the receipts of 1845-46, and those of 1848-49; being an average diminution of \$769,982 50, as will be seen by table marked (N.) hereto annexed; the loss of annual revenue being as follows:

On cottons,	\$918,894 00
On hempen goods	61,794 50
On sugar,	181,438 00
On coal,	70,030 00
	\$1,550,598 00

The gain as follows:	
On woollens	\$335,502 50
On iron	415,240 00
On hemp unmanufactured,	40,083 00
	\$810,816 50

The very small increase on the staples of woollens, iron, and unmanufactured hemp, compared with the vast injury occasioned to our production and the diminution thereby of our power of consumption, cannot fail to attract attention—while on the other articles named, the revenue and production have both suffered materially. It is believed that the revenue could be greatly increased by increasing the duties on these and other articles.

2. I propose a return to the system of specific duties on articles on which they can be conveniently laid. The effects of the present ad valorem system are two-fold, viz: on the revenue and on our own productions. Experience has, I think, demonstrated, that looking exclusively to the revenue, a specific duty is more easily assessed, more favorable to commerce, more equal, and less exposed to frauds, than any other system. Of course such a duty is not laid without reference to the average cost of the community. This system obviates the difficulties and controversies which attend an appraisal of the foreign market value of each invoice, and it imposes an equal duty on equal quantities of the same commodity.—Under the ad valorem system, goods of the same kind and quality, and between which there cannot be a difference in value in the same market at any given time, nevertheless may often pay different amounts of duty. Thus the hazards of trade are unnecessarily increased.

To levy an ad valorem duty on a foreign valuation equally, at the different ports, is believed to be impossible.—That the standard of value at any given time is precisely the same at any given time, is wholly improbable. The facilities afforded to frauds upon the revenue are very great, and it is apprehended that such frauds have been and are habitually and extensively practiced.

As the standard of value at every port must at last depend upon the average of the invoices that are passed there, every successful attempt at under valuation renders more easy all that follow it. The consequences are, not only that the revenue suffers, but that a certain sum is in effect annually given by the public among dishonest importers, as a premium for their dishonesty, but that fair American importers may be gradually driven out of the business, and their places supplied by unknown and unscrupulous foreign adventurers. As long ago as 1801, Mr. Gallatin urged the extension of specific duties on the ground now repeated—of the prevention of undervaluation. In his report of that year he used the following language: "Without any view to an increase of revenue, but in order to guard, as far as possible, against the value of goods being underrated in the invoices, it would be eligible to lay specific duties on all such articles now paying duties ad valorem as may be susceptible of that alteration." At that time specific duties were already laid on spirits and wines, sugar, molasses, tea, coffee, salt, pepper, steel, nails and spikes, hemp, coal, cordage, and several other articles.

The 8th Section of the act of 30th July, 1846, made it the duty of the collector, within whose district merchandise may be imported or entered, to cause the dutiable value of such imports to be ascertained, estimated, and ascertained in accordance with the provisions of existing laws.

By the 2d section of the act of 10th August 1846, it is provided, that, "in appraising all goods at any part of the United States, heretofore subjected to specific duties, but upon which ad valorem duties are imposed by the act of the thirtieth July last, entitled an act reducing the duty on imports and for other purposes, references shall be had to values and invoices of similar goods imported during the last fiscal year, under such general and uniform regulations for the prevention of frauds or undervaluations as shall be prescribed by the Secretary of the Treasury."

It will be observed that these last recited provisions do not authorize the levying of duties on the value of similar merchandise in any preceding year, but merely a reference to such value